
THE
ERRORS OF SENSIBILITY.

VOL. III.



THE
ERRORS
OF
SENSIBILITY.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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FOR WILLIAM LANE,
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M.DCC.XCIII.

THE
LIFE OF
JAMES
MILTON
A NOVEL



IN THE
MUSEUM

FOR WILLIAM LANE
LEADERS AND STREET
MUSEUM

THE
ERRORS OF SENSIBILITY.

LETTER LXXXVI.

THE REV. RICHARD BENSON,

TO

THE HON. EDWARD HERBERT.

Sir,

I CANNOT but feel myself a little surprised, that a gentleman of your distinction and education should not have learnt the indelicacy, to say no more, of forcing yourself into the house of a man who has expressed his

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B

un-

unwillingness to receive the honor of such visits. You would be much surprised, Sir, did I intrude myself upon the family of Lord and Lady Hereford, who wish not to admit me; and why should you allow yourself in a liberty you would, I presume, think very unjustifiable in another. It is not, Sir, because I am viewed in a new light at Hereford-Park, that I should be less happy than formerly to see you here;—I have no scruple to speak my motive,—I approve not those forward manners with which you address Miss Lucy Williams, who is committed to my protection. I am a stranger to your aim, and it behoves you to convince me you have an honorable purpose, or to cease what I must

must deem a persecution. Even with such a purpose I know not how far I should be warranted in receiving you, for my sister Harriot intreated me to withhold you from passing your time among us, as she knows the resolution of your family to discountenance any attention to her's. I must, therefore, repeat to you, that your presence at the Parsonage cannot but be very unacceptable and offensive to

Your respectful humble servant,

RICHARD BENSON.

B 2 LETTER

much deem a perfection. I can wish

~~I had not known that I should be~~

should be warranted in receiving you,

to the

LETTER LXXXVII.

would you not have been

among us, as she knows the reason

of your family to discontinue

any attention to her, there-

MISS WILLIAMS,

fore, repeat to you, that your presence

at the Parsonage cannot but be very

THE REV. RICHARD BENSON.

Dear Sir,

I AM greatly obliged by the sentiments you profess, and happy that your consideration led you to write to me, rather than to our oppressed Harriot, who would have been much distressed

distressed, and perhaps drawn from the friend she so affectionately watches over, by this intelligence.

The best idea which presents itself, is to endeavour to induce Lucy to come to me.—Though I cannot quit this place, I could carefully attend her in it; and Mr. Herbert, should he even follow her, would want a pretence to gain admission here.

I also shall, by this means (as I am sure you would kindly accompany her) have the gratification I so much wish, that of personally knowing a brother I already so highly esteem.

Love to all my sisters.—I enclose a letter for Lucy which I think best suited to draw her to me, and which, though calculated for the occasion, contains a real truth.

Ever, dear Sir,

Your affectionate sister and friend,

J. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER LXXXVIII.

MISS WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS LUCY WILLIAMS.

I NEVER, my dear Lucy, during the time our beloved Harriot was with you, fought to draw you hither, conscious that her example and her precepts were a treasure to you I could very inadequately supply;—
but

but now that she is at a distance, I yield to my natural and ardent wish, that I may see at least one of those dear sisters from whom I live in a sort of banishment. My care of my aunt would receive an almost necessary relaxation in such dear society;—and though unwilling to present to you, as I must, one object of sadness, I will, to the utmost of my power, promote your amusement in every other way, and I have kind neighbours who will assist me in this aim.

Adieu, my dear Lucy.—I had a letter, yesterday, from Harriot, and as she said she was also writing to you, you are doubtless apprised that Miss Baynton's

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Baynton's depression of spirits continues. I regret this both on her own account and on that of our beloved sister, who will, I fear, suffer more than she will express from this continued anxiety. I remain, in hopes of seeing you soon,

Ever your affectionate

JULIA WILLIAMS.

LETTER

NO ERRORS OF SENSIBILITY.

LETTER LXXXIX.

THE HON. EDWARD HERBERT,

TO

SIR HARRY BEACHCROFT.

Dear Harry,

I SUPPOSE there never existed so unlucky a scoundrel, (and a scoundrel in truth I am) as myself.—I blinded the Doctor, flattered the woman, and intoxicated my dear Lucy into the delirium

delirium of a passion similar to my own.

She told me, a sage sister had sent her an invitation to her house, which I perceived was designed merely to remove her from *me*, who am able enough to follow a longer chase than they can lead;—I, however, took it on the doleful,—if I now lost I never should recover her. At length I went even beyond my original purpose;—for there was, I profess, (and I am no professor,) more of accident than design in this affair.—Suffice it, that she consented to run away with me.

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I was not slow to provide the means,—but alas! had not proceeded above two miles, when who do you think appeared, to cross my way, and with a commanding voice that chilled me, ordered me to desist from my purpose, and resign my seat to him.

I obeyed, therefore, you may be sure it was not the Doctor;—he might have talked down the winds e'er he had influenced me. Nay, perhaps, for I am naturally no flincher, it was the *only man* on earth who could have moved me;—in one word, my brother!—who, I think, can mould me at his pleasure,—so much has he taught me to love while I honor him.

him. I was checked like a school-boy,—mounted his horse, as he commanded,—and now find myself in his study, waiting his arrival, with an emotion very like fear.—And ought I not to fear before his upright mind,—him who has been my guardian and protector in a thousand scenes of madness and folly!—who saved my little fortune from the ruin I had well nigh brought upon it at the gaming table,—and my life in the quarrel, that, on finding myself a dupe, I had embarked in!—I will be guided by him, for he has, even now, saved me from injuring the woman I feel that I was born to love;—to love perhaps to marriage, had she not been too easy

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easy a listener. Yet I am sure she
thought I aim'd at a lasting union,
for her breast is pure, tho' light. I
perceive my brother approaching and
dread to meet his eye.

Yours,

EDWARD HERBERT.

LETTER

LETTER XC.

LORD VINCENT,

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

NOTHING, my dear Neville, but an event which had some relation to the enchanting, but too cruel Harriot, could have roused me from the torpor of mind, to which, on quitting Baynton-Grove, I gave myself up.

I

I made from college an excursion of a few days, and on my return found a letter which made me set out instantly for Hereford-Park.

My brother, who is a warm hearted, rash, and ill judging youth, had, I found, been captivated by Lucy Williams. The silly, and, I confess, unworthy game I had played when I wished to secure an access to Mitford-Cottage, taught me, that though he might have little to hope from an excess of passion in her character, he had yet little to fear from the exertion of her reason,—and her levity, tho' in part the effect of her innocence, might be its destruction;—for Edward, tho' he has no baseness, has an
idle

idle vanity of seeking to be beloved, and of pressing his conquests.

I arrived just in time to prevent his taking her away in a post chaise, and carrying her the Lord knows whither, —for he had no scheme. I have concealed this from the family here, which, as it was known only to Edward's servant and my own, was not difficult;—and to Mr. Benson I have endeavoured to give it the air of a frolic, undertaken between boy and girl, to frighten and punish him for his intention of taking his sister away.

She still goes, however, and I mean to persuade Edward to wait awhile

Vol. III. C patiently,

patiently, and then I will endeavour to unite him to this really good tho' thoughtless girl, for life.

My mother will oppose this, but as I am sure my brother will be led by his fancy, this is undoubtedly the best he can take; and I shall feel some gratification in even this sort of relationship to my Harriot. — *My Harriot!* — would to Heaven she was.

How is poor Miss Baynton? — my mind looks forward to an event I can never endure to witness, — I could scarce bring myself to promote, — but which I never will impede. Some good,

good, I may, perhaps, at a distant period, find it, "to look at happiness through other's eyes."—If I should ever find it such, down with Rochefaucault's system.—If I live, I must live its refuter.

Your's most truly,

VINCENT.

C 2 LETTER

LETTER XCI.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

LORD VINCENT.

My Dear Friend,

THE first part of your letter alarmed, the next quieted, and the last perplexes me. I cannot comprehend you, for I see not that your brother's marrying Lucy could excite the sentiments it speaks. Will you decypher,

decypher, dear Lord?—I wish I could bribe you to it by any pleasant communication.

Miss Baynton still continues reluctant to the idea of marriage, and seems disturbed when I press her on the subject.—I talk much with the affectionate Lucy, who never quitted her an instant during that fatal period in which I lost her.

I find the detested Dormer solicited her love with the most pressing ardor, but was repelled with dignity and steadiness;—that at first he and Lady Caroline pretended to be disappointed of some one they expected to meet, and she gave herself up to

a seeming despair;—but that either wrought on by Maria's enquiries, or in hope by an assumed candour to touch her heart, the villain had confessed she had been ensnared by a fictitious story, which had possessed probability enough to deceive, from the brother of Lady Caroline having been killed in a duel a short time previous to her visiting Windsor, and the person he fought with not being known.

My sweet love's resentment, she tells me, was excessive; she utterly refused to see Lady Caroline, but Dormer sometimes forced his way, and tried every means to obtain her consent to marry him. He asserted that

that her friends could not (such caution had he used) discover her,—the servant who attended her from the Grove had been placed by himself,—the few people around him were (he aver'd) strictly under his influence,—and he declared she should never quit that place till she became his wife.

He was, thank God, disappointed of this hope, and even, Lucy tells me, mistaken in the fidelity of his people; some of whom only watched an opportunity to favor the escape of my Maria, or to apprise me of her situation. I find the dear creature's spirits were stronger, and she shewed more resolution during this period,
which

which may be called her captivity, than at any other of her life.

I designed, my dear Vincent, to have spoken to you of Miss H. Williams, and I have given you the sum of many conversations with Lucy;—had I been able to give you hope, believe me, I should not have wandered into any other subject, but there is a steadiness in her refusal I can neither combat nor account for.—She is born to bless supremely him she makes the object of her choice. I never knew a character so free from mortal failings.—Why cannot I promise her to my friend?—If I cannot assure you of happiness, let me at least induce you to woo contentment,
which

which is, perhaps, the greatest good to be attained on earth.

You see that even reciprocal love, (for surely my Maria loves me,) affords not bliss. Blame me not that I omit following the council I bestow; so near my wishes and still allowed that hope I am every instant tempted to resign,—I can fix no bounds to my desires.—And perfect happiness, or its contrast, misery, must fill the existence of your friend

F. NEVILLE.

LETTER

LETTER XCII.

MISS WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

I HAVE, my dear Harriot, in the period of your absence, thought our dear Lucy might favor me with her company, without that disadvantage the depriving her of your instructions would have occasioned. I find her very obliging and satisfied with my efforts

efforts to please, though not always quite chearful; we are both most so when you are our theme, and she speaks of you with a tenderness that cannot be counterfeited, and an admiration which only merit like your's could excite. — I am the more delighted at this, as it proves her mind has conquered the error which possessed it. I am inclined to think she has beheld Mr. Herbert with more partiality than she ever did his eldest brother; but not with such as need make us uneasy.

I beg to hear from you, I am anxious to know (forgive me) what other caprice has got possession of the unstable mind of Miss Baynton. You
always

always chide me for not loving her enough, but I have tried in vain to teach my heart another lesson. — She seems to me to have, more than you will confess, “batter’d at your peace,” without promoting her own or any one’s happiness.

Have I not seen your character change from a gay to a serious one, and your smiles of mirth, supplanted by smiles of complacence alone. — Has it not been the task of your life to struggle with a tenderness which ought to have constituted your felicity, and that of the man whose heart was your’s of right. — O Harriot, in one thing ever you are a dissembler! nay, be not surprized, it is not in relation
to

to yourself you have ever been so.—
 But I well know Sir Francis had, by
 assiduities too marked to be miscon-
 strued, won your heart ere you be-
 stowed it on him; and what you called
 the first influence of love, his passion
 for Miss Baynton, was in fact only
 the withdrawing of a better placed
 affection.—You was undoubtedly the
 object of his attachment before she
 appeared, and but for that event,
 would have become the object of his
 vows.—Pardon me that I do not quite
 forgive him. Adieu, my dear sister,
 Lucy writes. I am ever tenderly

Your's,

J. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER XCIII.

LORD VINCENT,

TO

THE MON. EDWARD HERBERT.

I WILL not, my dear Brother, reproach you with the past unthink-
ingness of your conduct; the com-
pliance you have testified with my
wishes, by forbearing to pursue Miss
Lucy Williams to the refuge she has
sought with her eldest sister, better
entitles

entitles you to my thanks. I will therefore confine myself to a pleasant theme, and tell you how happy you have made me by a conduct, which, proving one instance of self command, is (as the same principles produce the same effects) a favorable omen as to your future life; and this gives me more satisfaction, as I am inclined to make a proposal which I should avoid, did I not hope, Miss Lucy Williams has such power over you as to lead you to give up for her all your vices and follies, which, whenever yielded up at the shrine of beauty, consecrate that object, which might become to a corrupt mind, a snare and a bane.

Your

Your heart, dear Edward, is not corrupt, and I think you will not unite your fate with that of an amiable woman, without endeavouring to constitute the happiness of her's. I mean to endeavour, in case you desire it, to procure the approbation of my father, and (if possible) my mother, to your marriage with Lucy.—I shall not tell them, as it might encrease their solicitude for your making a high connection, that it is probable I shall always remain single; for I despair of obtaining the object of my unalterable and ardent love. — And never shall I offer that heart, which has been exalted by devoting itself to her, to an inferior character. I am on this account well able to spare you
part

part of the large income my father allows me, in aid of your expenditure.

Answer me candidly, and accept not the blessing I offer you, unless resolved on pursuing a conduct answerable to my wishes.

Your's affectionately,

VINCENT.

LETTER XCIV.

THE HON. EDWARD HERBERT,

TO

LORD VINCENT.

TEN thousand thanks to you, my dear and kind Brother. Be assured, that if you obtain for me my beloved Lucy, you will constitute yourself even ten times more my friend, than you have already done; and add a
boundless

boundless gratitude to that your former many and great obligations have excited.—I have this instant your letter;—believe my promises that you shall be the guide of my conduct.—I will be an obedient pupil, to you, my mentor.

I am setting off, your letter as my passport, to the good Mr. Benson's.—Many a time have I afflicted, I fear insulted him; but my follies are at an end, and I know his amiable mind will render peace-making an easy task. Dear, dear Brother, ever
your grateful and affectionate

EDWARD HERBERT.

LETTER XCV.

THE REV. RICHARD BENSON,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

My honoured and beloved Sister,

I Judged it right to keep from you that Mr. Herbert had much obtruded upon my family, and even a good deal won upon the good graces of Miss Lucy; because I thought I should communicate nothing but vexation to one, I am most
anxious

anxious to relieve from every care.—
I therefore applied to Miss Williams,
and was happy in confiding our
younger Sister to her kind protection;
more especially as her future caution
seemed secured by her consciousness
of having acted less wisely than a sister
of your's ought to have done.

Neither was this all my reliance;
for Lord Vincent, to whom I am in-
clined to believe we all owe more
than he is willing to acknowledge,
has produced a most striking change
in the conduct of his Brother, over
whom his influence is prodigious.

That I now think it right to im-
part thus much, is owing to a visit

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I have just received from Mr. Herbert, who proposes himself as the husband of Miss Lucy; and produces the sanction of a most handsome letter from Lord Vincent, as an authority to enforce his claim. I told him I must communicate this to you before I could give him the permission he solicited, to repair to Berkshire; and he is so altered a man, that he gave way to my desire.

I shall be glad to know if I have your approbation for giving the introduction he wishes to your sister; and am, my dear Madam, with most respectful love, in which my dear Fanny and Miss Charlotte join,

Your attached Servant,

RICHARD BENSON.

LETTER XCVI.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

TO

THE REV. RICHARD BENSON.

My dear Brother,

THE conduct of Lord Vincent by no means surprizes me; for his is the soul of honor and of kindness. But we must not avail ourselves of that liberality in his mind, and passion in his Brother, that would lead them to forget the distinction

tion of situation in their own favor; and the improbability of this connection ever being agreed to on the part of Lord and Lady Hereford.

Without their approbation I cannot be satisfied that it should take place, and must request you to signify as much to Mr. Herbert; and also to send the enclosed to the Marquis, whom I cannot be reconciled to leave in the dark as to the purposes of his sons.

I regret the uneasiness I shall inflict on Lucy, but the positive and unequivocal propriety of the measure, presses on my mind as a *commanding necessity*, and relieves me from the
pain

pain of deliberation, tho' it does not
save me from the pressure of regret.
Dear sir, with kind love to my sisters,
believe me ever,

Your affectionate

H. WILLIAMS.

P. S. My dear Miss Baynton grows
every day weaker, and fills me with
anxiety and alarm. A skilful Physician
attends her, and though this is con-
trary to her wishes, she is too gentle
not to submit to the request of her
friends. She seems not to despair of
her perfect restoration, and imputes
the present unfavorable symptoms, to
the fatigue of body, and agitation of
mind she has undergone.

LETTER

LETTER XCVII.

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

TO

THE MARQUIS OF HEREFORD.

My Lord,

I THINK it right to apprise your Lordship, that Mr. Herbert has distinguished my sister Lucy by a partiality so strong, as to lead him to seek an union with her of the most permanent nature.

As

As I have no reason to suppose such a measure would be approved by your Lordship or the Marchioness, I give you this intelligence the moment I myself have received it. I have the honor to be your Lordship's very respectful and

Obedient servant

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER XCVIII.

THE REV. MR. BENSON,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

My dear Sister,

I CANNOT but confess that a connection so advantageous as that which has been offered us, had too much to gratify me, to leave my mind open to a nice investigation of the conduct it was proper to pursue.

I

I willingly acknowledge your superiority in this instance, and have presented your letter to the Marquis. He received it with many acknowledgements of your candour, and said they were ill entitled to so honorable a conduct being held towards them. Yet he confessed, that being very sure his lady would oppose, what himself should not have thought it improper to consent to, he must entreat me to unite my endeavours with his, to estrange his son from this pursuit.

I cannot but find great difficulty in this, as Mr. Herbert has familiarized himself in my family; and indeed introduced a friend, (Sir Harry Beachcroft) whose absence will, I
fear,

fear, not be a little regretted by Miss Charlotte, to whom he has shewn much partiality. And indeed I had hoped, that by his following the example of Mr. Herbert, both these amiable girls might be disposed of in a way more suited to their education and accomplishments, than that I have been able to bestow on my Fanny; who is nevertheless content with her lot, and a true blessing to, your faithful friend and brother,

RICHARD BENSON.

LETTER

LETTER XCIX.

THE MARQUIS OF HEREFORD.

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

Dear Madam,

WITH my best thanks for your most obliging information, I have to offer my apologies, for desiring to prevent an alliance, whence, in so many respects, I am conscious I should derive much honor.

But

But as my son is too young and thoughtless to make his marriage at all desirable at this time, I am better reconciled to the endeavour of drawing him from a prepossession in favor of the sister of Miss Harriot Williams, than I could otherwise be. My Wife desires to join in acknowledgements, for your information; and with my daughters, present best regards. I have the honor to be, dear Madam, with the sincerest respect, your ever obedient and

Faithful servant,

HEREFORD.

LETTER

LETTER C.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

LORD VINCENT.

I LEAD here, my dear Vincent, a sad, anxious, and bewildered life. My Maria will not listen to my entreaties to complete that union which has been so strangely and unhappily interrupted.

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Miss

Miss H. Williams, who is the most exemplary of friends, urges her either to acquiesce in my wishes, or to give me a reason for her delay. Her failing health is the only one she will assign; but I do not think it the only one that operates upon her. All my comfort is, that her affection appears unabated, nay even stronger than ever. We never speak of Dormer, nor the wretched Lady Caroline, lest it should affect her mind, which seems the very seat of exquisite and too lively sensation. We learn that our silence had not been effectual in concealing from Lord and Lady Angus the vile conduct of their daughter; and that they would by no means receive her.

I find your brother is not to be permitted so happy a fate as the projected marriage promised him. How short sighted are men as to their true interest!—Strange, that your father, who really has knowledge of the world, should oppose, with respect to his son, the only measure likely to quiet and domesticate his too wild and unsettled temper!

He has already filled him with care, and may do so more and more, if he does not consent to this match. It is owing, I am sure, to the Marchioness, not to my good old Lord.

Adieu, dear friend,

Your's,

F. NEVILLE.

 LETTER CI.

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS,

MISS LUCY WILLIAMS.

I AM afraid, my dear Lucy, I am about to draw on myself what I should ever wish to avoid, *your reproaches of mind at least*, should they reach neither your lips nor your pen, for a conduct I yet cannot repent.

Mr.

Mr. Herbert has proposed himself as the husband of my dear girl, and I felt myself obliged to acquaint his friends with this measure, that they might act as they thought fit on the occasion. I am sorry to say this union is opposed, as I expected it would; but I trust you will see the motive of my conduct, and not be dissatisfied with it. Under this disappointment, for such I doubt it will be to you, I rely upon it you will act with that resolution and propriety so peculiarly call'd for.

Do not, I beseech you, admit a correspondence with Mr. Herbert, which would be a degradation of that

delicacy which is the first ornament
of woman.

I shall be most happy to hear from
you, and to learn that you are satis-
fied of the affectionate tenderness of

Your

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER CII.

THE HON. EDWARD HERBERT.

TO

MISS LUCY WILLIAMS,

My dearest Angel,

TRANSPORTED as
I have been by my brother's kindness,
in assisting my hopes of an union on
which alone my happiness depends,
think of the despair with which I

find

find even his interference is of no avail.

My mother (for it is not my father) will not hear of my marriage; she would have me seek out some rich ugly dame of quality, who, like herself, (forgive me that I write in rage,) substitutes wealth and rank, for grace, beauty, and virtue. But, my love, she never shall prevail; I here devote myself to you, and if you bear me that affection I once flattered myself I had excited, you will not oppose me in the most earnest wish of my heart.

My father has dispatched me back to college, with a sage tutor to take care of me, and watch all my footsteps;

steps;—but I have found out the old fellow's weak side. I appear to be totally changed by his *sagacious arguments*, and submissive to his *judicious directions*.

Sir Harry Beachcroft, who has consented against his will to return with me, has agreed to head a party of jovial fellows, who will “with wine and waffail so convince” this able logician, that he shall not have a word to utter in his own defence;—and when he is once committed to his bed in safety, I may put my “great business in that night's dispatch.” My friends here get every thing in readiness.

I

I shall be able to escape by eleven tomorrow.—The moon will be propitious.—I take so *much* time that you may be prepared, and so *little* that you may not have time to dissuade me.—My trusty messenger is too clever a fellow not to contrive to convey this to your hands unperceived.—We have fixed the place where I shall await your arrival.

I will not suffer myself to doubt your kind compassion leading you to entrust yourself to one who will study every instant of his life to repay you for the blessing you bestow.

A little time will convey us to Scotland, and a few caballistical words
unite

unite us for ever. Our hearts, for I
will hope our feelings are mutual,
were joined by a still more instantane-
ous power, and one glance from
you, rivetted as your slave,

Your

EDWARD HERBERT.

LETTER

LETTER CIII.

MISS LUCY WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS.

PERHAPS, my dear sister, the pride of convincing you your kind cares to form my heart aright were not wholly thrown away, is the strongest motive which can occur to produce in me that conduct you have laboured to inculcate.

I enclose you the letter I had an hour ago put into my hands, from Mr. Herbert;—I have shewn it my sister, and told her my resolution to act as she advised me.—She judges it best I should immediately set off, under the guardianship of a friend of her's, for Mr. Benson's.

I go, my honored sister, not indeed without some struggle; for Mr. Herbert is a most engaging creature, and I fear it will be impossible for me to banish him from my heart.—Yet my conduct must appear most harsh in his eyes.

I wished to have left a letter, but it is in vain.—I cannot write, unless I
write

write as he desires. Forgive me, my dear sister, your mind, free from all weakness, cannot judge of the contending feelings experienced by

Your dutiful and affectionate sister,

L. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER CIV.

MISS WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

IS not our dear Lucy's proceedings, my Harriot, a proof how widely they err, who judge of human characters by single instances in conduct?—How can such comprehend that the same girl who trusted herself without hesitation,

hesitation in the power of a wild lover, should resist him when his offers were more directly honorable, and his passion more evidently fixed into a permanent attachment.

Those who know the power of a well regulated self-love, to produce decorum and all its sister virtues, will be able to discover, that by awakening Lucy's pride and emulation, I have brought her to wish for some opportunity of testifying that she was worthy to be your sister and élève.

— Shewing me the letter was the effort of an instant ; — this first step secured the rest. She does not repent,

pent, but the tears bedew her cheeks,
and love has added a refinement to
her character which renders it in-
finitely more engaging than ever.

Adieu, dear Harriot,

Your's,

JULIA WILLIAMS.

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LETTER

LETTER CV.

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS LUCY WILLIAMS.

NEVER, my dear Lucy, did I know so true a pleasure, as that you have bestowed upon me. A victory *over ourselves* is the only one of which we can judiciously boast; for in all *other conquests*, fortune has its share! those

those we gain, if I may so style it at home, are the fruit of *reason* and of *virtue*,—let me hope, my love, you have not sacrificed too much in this instance. Will it be a motive to your perseverance, if I impart to you a secret, that will convince you I am a better judge what it is to combat our affections, than you had supposed me.

When I was in most early youth, the death of Sir Hugh Neville, (who joined my father with his widow in the guardianship of his son) led Sir Francis to our house, as to a sort of home. Thus he was accustomed to view me as a sister; and I learnt insensibly to regard him with an at-

tachment that took full possession of my heart.

I certainly let my fancy present him as having imbibed the same feelings; and so obtained a justification to my own mind, I had not otherwise experienced.—But, as perhaps to this mistake, might be traced the origin of my own tenderness, it was the cause rather than the apology, for my passion. Suffice it, that I was no sooner convinced the heart of Sir Francis was destined to my Maria, than I made an effort on myself which has succeeded to my hope. Julia alone has known my sentiments,—I endeavoured to silence her,—I strictly silenced myself;—nor has it
been

been till I am fully assured I may trust myself with this subject, that I have entered upon it.

My mind is totally absorbed in anxiety to see my friend the wife of the man who alone can render her happy, and who can never know felicity, but through her means. Their love took place the instant they met; he was struck by her loveliness, won upon by her pensive sorrow, and fixed irrevocably her's by that returning animation himself had inspired. She saw in him the only object who could realise the beautiful visions her own lively and tender imagination had formed; and there never was a sincerer passion than that

she felt,—though by the peculiar nature of her character, she often put his patience and constancy to the proof; and by shewing the excess of her power, has strengthened it. — A method I would not advise meaner beauties to adopt.

I mean if possible to win Maria to come with me to Mitford, and think a change of scene might be serviceable to her; as she is not so ill but that she is able to endure slow journeys. She does not meet this idea with much reluctance, but has not absolutely promised; though she says she feels it not justifiable to detain me from home,—and indeed I am most anxious to see you again.

I have written to you on a subject I should otherwise have avoided, to testify that we are able to regulate our inclinations and our wishes, if we are but earnest in making an effort. You have more merit than myself, for in fact, I had no lover to resist; yet I look back with satisfaction on the conduct I have pursued, and am most highly delighted by the excellent behaviour of my dear Lucy, whose I am, with

Sincere affection,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER CVI.

LORD VINCENT.

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

I HAVE carried a point, my dear friend, that was most interesting to me. My Father and Mother consent to the marriage of my Brother with the lovely Lucy Williams.

He

He left his tutor in a condition which did little honor to the choice which had been made of him; and this tends to convince them it is not easy to conduct an animated young man, otherwise than he is inclined to go.

Miss H. Williams's candid conduct, with Miss Lucy's imitation of her virtue in flying *from* her lover, instead of flying *with* him, has had great effect on my father; and add to this, the affection borne to me, gives me a considerable degree of influence.

I have not said how unlikely I am to fulfil their hopes of seeing me
greatly

greatly connected, which they possibly look for as one return for their present condescension. — This was a subject I saw no necessity to enter upon.

Sir Harry Beachcroft, who has no parents to controul him, has proposed himself to Miss Charlotte Williams; and the prospect of an affluent and respectable alliance there, has added its mite to the weight of those concurring motives, which tho' not of themselves separately of sufficient influence to overcome my mother's objections, were, when united, adequate to my purpose.

Farewell,

Farewell, dear friend, how stands your love suit?—is Maria become rational, and will she be happy now she may; or is she above condescending to mortal felicity? I cannot comprehend her!

Your's

VINCENT.

LETTER

LETTER CVII.

THE MARQUIS OF HEREFORD,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

Dearest Madam,

THE effect your very noble conduct has had upon me, may be easily judged of, by one who is no stranger to a right feeling; who even allows for those false ones, in which we too often live, but in which
it

it does not become an old man to die.

The period during which I may expect to continue on earth cannot be long; and I rejoice that ere I quit it, I shall at least make one child happy.

Vincent appears to me to be the prey of affliction. I could have wished to seek in you the cure of his sorrows; but he tells me he has long relinquished the hope of being able to win your love. I cannot but be surprised at this; yet it is perhaps fortunate, for I doubt much if with respect to our eldest son, Lady Hereford could ever be brought to see

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see with my eyes. I rejoice that she has not been inexorable as to the destination of Edward; and remain anxious for the event which shall unite my son to the sister of a lady I so highly esteem. Dear Madam, your respectful and

Affectionate servant,

HEREFORD.

LETTER

LETTER CVIII.

THE MARCHIONESS OF HEREFORD,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

Madam,

I HOLD it but a proper supplement to that consent I have been led to bestow for the nuptials of my second son with Miss Lucy Williams, that I should acquaint you with my satisfaction on the occasion. I am induced to believe your sister both
amiable

amiable and well instructed, and that I have only to regret that loss of fortune and station, I might have expected in the wife of Mr. Herbert. Lord Vincent, however, has deservedly great influence with me, and he has used it warmly. I hope I shall see him form some connection from which I shall derive unmixed pleasure; for, I scruple not to acknowledge, it is the first object of my heart to see him *greatly* married. I am, Madam, with the compliments of my daughters,

Your humble servant and friend,

GERTRUDE HERFORD.

LETTER

LETTER CIX.

MISS H. WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS WILLIAMS.

I HAVE had, my dearest Julia, excessive satisfaction, in hearing of Lord and Lady Hereford's consent to their son's marriage with Lucy. I have answer'd their letters, and written to my sister on the subject. I have also much pleasure in Charlotte's being

Vol. III. G beloved

beloved by Sir Harry Beachcroft, whose character I well know. I have from him a kind and polite letter.— Here ends the catalogue of my comforts.

This house, which I have not prevailed on Maria to quit, and in which I cannot leave her, presents nothing but sadness. I must not deceive myself, her illness is certainly of a very alarming nature. Dr. Hudson thinks with me I doubt not, but he has not spoken clearly ; and, indeed I am withheld from pressing him on the subject, from my dread of the effect such an evil would have on Sir Francis.

He,

He, as I once said to Maria, *literally* seems now to live by her breath ; and what is strange, his love so fills his mind, that it has precluded, what, in such circumstances I should think its natural effect, fear. He is anxious and watchful over her, but seems not aware of that evident decay, to which I can no longer shut my eyes. This is the more extraordinary, as on her first complaint he was more than necessarily alarm'd.

I yesterday prevailed on Mrs Morrison to give a distant hint of that danger, which is I fear most imminent ; but in accents of horror he besought her not to fill him with terrors which might drive him to madness ; and

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soon after fell into a discourse on the improbability of our fears.—Thus does he close his eyes on that sad prospect, he feels he has not the courage to support.

I see Dr. Hudson, and will, though I dread to do it, question him concerning my Maria; and, should he lead me to believe my fears are pre-fages, induce him to endeavour a little to prepare the mind of her unhappy lover.

Adieu, I cannot enjoy even the good which awaits those I have so anxiously watched over and loved, so sick at heart is your

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER CX.

MRS. MORRISON,

TO

MISS WILLIAMS.

MY pen, dearest Madam, is the only one equal to acquainting you with an event we all deplore—the loss of the lovely and interesting Maria!—But, accustomed to afflictions, I have learnt to endure them; and misfortunes,

G 3

though

though they fill my heart with sorrow,
strike it with no surprise.

Ever since I have been with the amiable Miss Baynton, I have perceived her to be the victim of an active sensibility that allowed no repose to her mind. I perceived the tumult of her spirits much encreased at the time of our landing at Lancaster, and they have only appeared to settle into calmness, in proportion as her health declined.

Two days ago I had a long conversation with her, respecting my excellent and lamented friend—your honored father; which (I suppose
from

from my account of the composed fortitude with which he resigned life) seemed to infuse into her mind a delight to which she had been long a stranger.

She has left her fortune, except an annuity kindly allotted to me, between your brother and Miss Harriot.—Her will was short, and written in her own hand the day before her death. The disposition in favor of your brother surprises me; but your sister and Sir Francis are so absorbed in grief that they do not mark it.

She had latterly been frequently writing, and entrusted to my care a packet

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packet for your sister, and letter to Sir Francis, which I have not, lest it should add to their afflictions, yet had courage to deliver.

I remain, dear Madam, with great respect, your obliged servant,

H. MORRISON.

LETTER

LETTER CXI.

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS,

TO

MISS WILLIAMS.

AS I know my dear Julia is filled with anxiety for me I *will* write myself, though they wish to withhold me from it. I like to tell you by my own pen that I am able to quit this place with my kind brother in law, who, on the first news of my affliction, came

came to seek, and if possible comfort me.

Dear Sir Francis is in a state of such despair, increased by the sanguineness of his hopes, that we dare not leave him 'till Lord Vincent arrives; but as he was immediately apprised of our distress we expect him hourly.

Ever your's,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER CXII.

THE SAME,

TO

THE SAME.

YOUR letter of consolation and kindness, my dear Julia, has had its effect;—it has taught me to be grateful for, and pleased by the generous sympathy that dictated it. More than this even you cannot effect;—there is something of delusion in all the prospective

pective delights of life that cheats us of our *actual sorrows*, by substituting in their place an *ideal good*; and the destruction of our hopes, by the dissipation of our imagined pleasures, gives back to the mind its full consciousness of real evils.

Lucy and Charlotte have both written to tell you my illness had in it nothing to alarm, though it has prevented me from writing myself.

I enclose you, my love, the sweet Maria's last letter,—I request it back. Unable to copy, and unwilling to have it traced by other hands, I reluctantly part with it;—for I wish you to know
that

that transcendant creature we have lost.

I have now and then a few lines from Lord Vincent, who, knowing how much affliction possesses my mind, ceases, with that delicacy which distinguishes his character, to encrease it by any expressions of love. —Such a measure would have deprived me of the comfort of hearing of poor Sir Francis, who has not himself yet written; neither have I known in what words to address him on his heavy loss, without encreasing rather than mitigating his sorrows.

I must rest till tomorrow, when I hope to finish this;—my hand and
spirits

spirits are both wearied with this first effort. — — — — —

— — — — —
 I am not equal to making much comment on the letter of my beloved Maria. She has indeed left us for *congenial* skies.—Let me observe, that whether it appears in weakness or in strength,—in resisting evil or in yielding to sorrow,—“spirits are not finely touched but to fine issues.”—
 —Oh, my Julia, tho’ Heaven has blessed me with more of fortitude and of exertion, yet my mind is as far beneath her’s, as is my person inferior to that seraphic loveliness, that shed resplendent light around *her beauty*.

Never,

Never, never can her wishes be fulfilled!—No man can survive such a loss!—No woman presume to hope love from one, who has been affianced to a heavenly being!—Praise ceases to be hyperbolick when referred to her. Her form exceeded those which youthful poets fancy when they love!—Her soul was even too perfect and high wrought to be confined in the *most exquisite* of earthly tabernacles.

Farewell, my Julia, I could write of her for ever,—the theme transports me, and I feel no weakness;—but I am reminded to desist, and will yield to my kind friends.

I have made a point that the marriages of my sisters shall not be deferred, and next week they are to enter into those engagements which will, I hope, constitute the happiness of all the parties.

Your's ever,

H. WILLIAMS.

LETTER

LETTER CXIII.

MISS BAYNTON,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

(ENCLOSED IN THE FOREGOING.)

I FEEL, my excellent friend, I have some time felt, that I shall not long be an inhabitant of this earth!—To *have liv'd*, if by so doing I have prepared my spirit for a higher state, is a *true blessing*;—and tho' that blessing to *me* has constituted the trouble and
Vol. III. H affliction,

affliction, rather than the happiness of those I love, they continue all that tenderness I have too often deserv'd to forfeit.—This thought draws tears from me,—mourn not for them ; they are among the last my eyes will shed. —
— — — — —

You see how careful I am become of myself ; I break this letter into little portions, not to exhaust a feeble body, nor yield to the influence of a yet more feeble mind. I have been learning to conquer my remorse, and its power every day decreases, as better hopes break in and teach me, that tho' by infatuated weakness of character, I have forfeited my title to happiness in this world, I may yet emulate that superior

perior blessedness which awaits the repentant and the forgiven. — — —
— — — — —

Let me a little endeavour to account for, tho' not justify, my conduct to my dearest friend—for my Neville, I scruple not to say, *is more than my friend*—the object of my *perfect and unalterable love* !—Of *such* love, that I adorn all the blessed Saints I go to, with minds as pure ; and (as I have not yet learn'd to view unembodied spirits) with persons as lovely ; a smile as gentle ; a glance as penetrating !—Alas, I might have made *him* happy—been happy with him !—Are there joys beyond this ? Surely there are, for the *capacity for being blessed* enlarges on

us as earthly passions, vices, and follies sink beneath the chilling touch of death. — — — — —

I have wandered, my dear Harriet, from my purpose, let me recall it and for once be collected—it is time, it is *more than time!* When I first knew you, my parents' fondness uniting with my own ardour of disposition, had led me to affix very different ideas to common words, than those that are generally adopted. A *friend* was to devote *all* her thoughts to me ; a *lover* to be *literally* an *adorer*. Your affection scarcely disappointed me ; my Neville was just what I expected. In him the least failure or inattention

to

to even possible wishes, would have been a mortal crime, a death to love. Thus was I prepared to be the victim of whatever deceit it might be thought worth while to practice. — — —

At *Windsor* I formed an intimacy with that dreadful creature who has mark'd my fate, Lady Caroline M'Leod. Let me not rail on her, she has taught me wisdom.—But at what price?— I must not think of it ! — — —

She induced me, on a romantic notion of observing his obedience, to send Sir Francis that fatal journey to London. I thought my following

H 3

him

him thither was the effect of my own whim—but I was every way her puppet. Blush, blush Maria, to have dethron'd your own reason, and trifled with both friendship and love, as the head of malice, guided by art, play'd on the too easy keys of your wild fancy! I had been led to imbibe a ridiculous jealousy of Lady Susan Wentworth, I have discovered since how unfounded;—it was sufficient however to draw me towards the snare dug for my unwary feet. — — —
— — — — —

Lady Caroline pursued me to Baynton - Grove—she flatter'd, rul'd me. But when my love appear'd, as the Sun disperses an offensive and
chilling

chilling mist which would obstruct its influence, the power she had over me vanished. You will see by the horrid letter I enclose, how thoroughly I was understood ; this was no time to practice on my gratified heart—fool—dupe that I was !—But I merited all !—I scarce regarded the feelings of other minds, but thought the world was made for *me* ;—and so indeed were its *richest* gifts, had I been worthy to receive them. — —

This wretched woman contrived a letter from a man she called her husband, who pretended to be pursued by her friends, for the destruction of her brother. It bore to my weak
eye

eye the character of truth, in the language of nature;—it was the stamp of falsehood, varnished by deceit. He who brought this vile letter was represented as the most humane and honourable of men ; but his brow had no openness, his language seem'd studied. — Oh, you shall know all my folly !—this it was deceived me.

I had been studying Levater ; was become an enthusiast to his system. And is it thus, questioned I myself, that you yield to the influence of a prepossession and prejudice ? You will forsake your friend in her distress, because a writer has heated your imagination through the warmth of his
own,

own, and persuaded you to read the li-
 niments of your fellow creatures. Shall
 you read but to condemn? Recollect
 how much caprice has hitherto sway'd
 you; yield not to it now. Cover
 not your aversion to quit that country
 which holds your Neville, under a
 fictitious excuse. We are taught that
hearts are open only unto God; how
 then shall the *secrets of the heart* be
legibly engraved on the *form of man*?
 Even thus a right principle, view'd
 by an irrational mind, misled me.
 I must now quit you, for I have
 written much, and the end of my
 melancholy narration draws nigh. —

— — — — —

I gave myself up to the guidance of this deceitful woman ; but when I understood the base scheme by which I had been trepanned, a state which either was, or nearly resembled madness, succeeded. My good Jenny watched by, comforted me, and sought the means of my escape,

The wicked Dormer pressed his hated passion, but I was unmoved as a rock before him ; I did not even fear. New powers, new resolutions supported me. I forbid Lady Caroline my presence, with an authority by which her haughty spirit was subdued.—She intruded no more *there*. Had I never after seen her I might yet perhaps—oh, no,—never, never could

could my mind have been sooth'd to calmness and peace. It *exhausted* itself in efforts to repel the bold and hated Dormer. I succeeded, — but never did sleep visit my eyes, or watchfulness cease from my soul. My deliverers brought joy, but they brought *not rest*. — — — — —

The dreadful fears which soon succeeded for the life of him my rashness had been the means of exposing, quite exhausted the little strength which remained to me. He recovered, and at the idea of returning to England, and to *you*, my heart felt an emotion of delight. — It was transient however. A person habited
as

as a sailor, but whom I too well knew to be the cruel Caroline, was officious in offering assistance as I landed; pressing up to me she put within my hand the hateful picture of her own mind, and too just one of my folly, which I enclose. No word accompanied this action, and it was unperceived. — — — — —

'Tis strange, my beloved Harriet, that my eyes being opened to a sense of my weakness, left me no less its slave. I felt that I had been the sacrifice of an imagination susceptible to impression, and closed against reflection. Yet I was no less agitated and subdued by the wretched creature,

ture, who persecuted me to, and in, death. Read, thou beloved contrast to the malicious Caroline, the paper she gave me. It bereft me of the small remains of comfort I experienced ; made me view myself as doubly a destroyer ; altho' I felt I ought rather to have rejoiced at my escape, than lamented the sacrifice which attended it. But, weakness, thy name is Maria !

To Miss Baynton

‘ MAY the sight of my writing
 ‘ strike you with dismay ; and
 ‘ the contents of my letter fill you
 ‘ with despair. May the vows I have
 ‘ twice

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‘ twice interrupted never be pledged,
‘ or my curses on your marriage,
‘ should you dare to fulfill it, poison
‘ its blessings, by superstitious dread
‘ and agonizing remorse. I will de-
‘ nounce to you your crimes, that
‘ you may not, from inattention to
‘ their magnitude, enjoy a life you
‘ have taught me to loathe, and *there-*
‘ *fore* to quit. For why should I
‘ endure an existence which can af-
‘ ford me no pleasure, other than
‘ that of revenge; — better to be se-
‘ cured by dying. By dying I enable
‘ myself to tell you, that you are twice
‘ a murderer !

‘ It matters not what hand points
‘ the sword, or administers the poison ;
‘ that

‘ that which makes life hateful, is
 ‘ the true affassin. I lov’d my Dor-
 ‘ mer, to madness loved him ; was
 ‘ only not legally his wife, because
 ‘ we were equally devoid of riches.
 ‘ *Your* fortune was a prize, which
 ‘ might have been shared between
 ‘ *him* whose bold enterprise entitled
 ‘ him to this reward, and *her*, whose
 ‘ fondness led her to assist in gaining
 ‘ it. Your ductile, weak, and vain
 ‘ mind, made you an easy prey.

‘ We had not entered upon this
 ‘ daring plot, but that we beheld in
 ‘ you a ready dupe. We suspended
 ‘ it during the time your lover was at
 ‘ Baynton-Grove, because conscious
 ‘ of his superior influence. He was
 ‘ withdrawn.

' withdrawn from you, as if to se-
 ' cure our success ;—that we obtain'd
 ' it not, and that you broke the pro-
 ' mise your weakness gave us of a
 ' perfect conquest, proves *you*, more
 ' than *myself*, a dissembler ; and the
 ' blood of him for whom alone I
 ' wished to live, was the price of
 ' your *inconsistency*, not of your *virtue*.
 ' *He died your victim* !—perhaps even
 ' that I had forgiven,—but he *liv'd*
 ' your slave !

' Had you not won his love, think
 ' you you had so long been safe ?
 ' Ever when I urged him to be no
 ' longer foiled, he vexed me with
 ' delays. At length I charg'd him
 ' with the detested truth, and, to
 ' drive

‘ drive me to desperation, he con-
 ‘ fessed that he felt something of di-
 ‘ vinity about you, he durst not
 ‘ violate.

‘ The arrival of your champions
 ‘ succeeded ;—I cared not where they
 ‘ drove me ;—my Father’s house, a
 ‘ dungeon, or a grave, were equal—
 ‘ from the first I was driven, the last I
 ‘ only wait to fill, till I have the
 ‘ means of blasting by my maledic-
 ‘ tions, the delights of her, who has
 ‘ been the destruction of the man I
 ‘ lov’d, and (for as you read this line
 ‘ you may view me in the instant of
 ‘ dissolution) of

‘ CAROLINE M’LEOD.’

Would you, my excellent friend, with your serene, religious, and regulated mind, believe it possible, that so malicious and avowed a purpose, has yet operated to encrease the sadness of my heart. I trace all my afflictions to my own folly; and tho' I do not directly charge myself with the death of these children of vice, I yet perceive not the less that all the happiness this world can bestow might have been mine, had I taught myself to *reason*, as well as to *feel*. How did I give up this happiness by submitting to her guidance, whose flattery was most unbounded and perpetual; and who, for evil, did what no one ever does for good—devoted every faculty of her soul to fall in with my prejudices,

dices, and to reconcile me to those excesses of my own caprice, of which I sometimes doubted the propriety.

I see now that no friendship, no love, no honourable principle will induce an absorption of all our emotions into *one*. Duties, cares, and even pleasures, must intervene to checker the road of life with various views preparative to its end, and the bright prospect then to open upon us. Love itself becomes a crime, when the lover is an idolator ; what then must her error be, who seeks to be an idol ? *My lover* was too near the character, for even me to be long dissatisfied with him ; but on one moment's

doubt of my being the perpetual object of his thoughts, hung all the colour of my fate.

O, may he meet a happier and wiser woman !—But that I know my Harriot's resolution to continue single, I would present to your mind his worth, and how *you might reward it*. But as it is I dare not press the idea. Adieu, my dearest friend,

Your's most tenderly,

MARIA BAYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER CXIV.

MISS BAYNTON,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

(MADE UP WITH THE FOREGOING.)

ARE you then, my dear Harriot, who have been my chief blessing thro' life, destin'd also to be my comforter in death? — I see that you are. A conversation just held with Mrs. Morison, has opened on me a new light,

which shines with convincing clearness. By my thoughtless mind alone, could it thus long have been unperceived.—My time is not long, let me not use delay.

In conversing this day with Mrs. Morrison, of your honour'd father, I expressed a wonder, that with so excellent a friend as Sir Francis, to share your cares, he had laid the whole weight of them on you alone. Her answer led me to think the General had been disappointed in the idea of seeing you united to his ward. He could not have been *disappointed*, had not some *probability* of such an event occur'd ;—I have pursued this idea.

I have perused your letters *previous* and *after* my visit to you, I see they speak a different language. Oh, my kind Harriot, your friendship yielded him to me, whom you knew less equal than yourself to conquer my feelings. I did not however rob you of his heart, it has been ever your's ;—a delirium of passion led him to me, and to you, while he substituted the name of friend for that of lover, he retained all his original tenderness.

A thousand times when talking of Lord Vincent, has he told me, he look'd on you as formed above all women, to give the truest happiness to him you favour'd with your hand. Receive him back, my love, and if
indeed

indeed the visionary season in which he has known me, presses painfully on his recollection, comfort, console him; teach him to know I was not formed for *earthly bliss*, and let his love be gratified, by believing this consciousness helps to fit me for *heavenly*.—Paint to him that I have left a state of tryal for one of reward; and while you together fill up the measure of temporal duties, you are so exemplary fitted to perform, think with gratitude rather than regret, how early I (that am ill calculated to acquit myself of those obligations actual life demands) was, by the dispenser of mercy, permitted

“Brighter scenes to seek above,

“In the realms of *peace* and love.”

Let

Let me beseech you to suffer no consideration to withhold you from accepting him, I now see was ever destined to you. To deprive you of a pretence for hesitation or delay, your brother shares my fortune. Thus all your honored father's wishes are fulfilled. And will you not also fulfill those of

Your ever grateful friend,

MARIA BAYNTON.

LETTER

LETTER CXV.

MISS BAYNTON,

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

My Beloved Neville,

THE last act of my life shall be devoted to you, to assure you of my tender affection; and to entreat your pardon for all those sorrows I have caused you. Of myself I have no more to say, but will turn to a better subject.

You,

You, my dearest, have a heart formed for love and domestic happiness; seek them in my friend, — in the amiable Harriot. I know of no perfection which is not her's; if you win her affection you will have nothing to repent.

I have written her a long letter, — accept a short one. I took a pleasure in reserving this for my last temporal employment. — Sorrow not for me, I go to bliss! — I go unregrettingly, for I leave you to a comforter in my beloved friend.

Forever Your's,

MARIA BAYNTON,

LETTER

LETTER CXVI.

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE,

TO

MISS H. WILLIAMS.

(ENCLOSING THE FOREGOING.)

I Enclose you, my dearest and best friend, a copy of those precious lines my beloved, and, alas ! too angelic Maria, spent her last moments in tracing.

My

My kind friend, Lord Vincent, who has been, from the instant I lost her, my monitor, my guide, and support, has continued with me till this moment; he will continue with me till I hear from you, but tells me he cannot longer delay those travels, he but deferred for my sake.

How must I address you?—How account for the length of time I have let go by without addressing you?—I will use the language of truth, it will justify me at the shrine of virtue! If you should despise and condemn me, the hope of comfort, which is beginning to diffuse itself around my heart, will vanish. But if you permit
me

me to throw myself at your feet, you will find me the most grateful of men.

Let me convince you of the sincerity with which I solicit your affection, and assure you all my hopes of happiness are bound up in you, and that my heart rests all its wishes on your favour, by adding the confession, that even this address, and the strong conviction that you alone can be my consoler, originates perhaps in that my Maria tells me so.

There never was a moment in which your kind partiality was not necessary to my happiness ; and in which I was not anxious to be distinguished as the friend of Miss Harriot Williams.

I retrace the time when that friendship was indeed the Sister of love ! That I am unworthy such a blessing as I solicit from you, can be urged as no objection ; wherever connected, you must condescend to one far beneath your own excellence. No man can deserve you ; and the more you pardon, the more you act in conformity to the superiority of your exalted nature.

Suffer me to repair to Mitford ; let me endeavour to win your heart to pity, if not to love, a disconsolate, yet most tenderly affectionate admirer and ardent friend, in

Your

FRANCIS NEVILLE,

LETTER

LETTER CXVII.

MISS HARRIOT WILLIAMS,

TO

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

I WILL not, my dear Sir Francis, refuse to see the friend from whose society I always derive pleasure, because I doubt, if yielding to his present wishes is likely to insure his happiness.

There

There is a theme in which we shall always find mutual delight,—come to me then, and let us dwell on it, without the mixture of any consideration which might throw a restraint into those communications of heart and sentiment, which is the character of friends we have ever so happily and freely indulged in.

Your affectionate,

H. WILLIAMS.

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K

LETTER

LETTER CXVIII.

LORD VINCENT,

To

SIR FRANCIS NEVILLE.

MY dear Neville must not be offended, when I confess that I have used some concealment with respect to him.

I have long been convinc'd that you possessed the love of the amiable
and

and engaging Harriot Williams; this secret was betrayed by her at the moment of receiving the letter you wrote in the distraction of your soul. The ardour with which she bad me fly to and save you, was more than the language of friendship. I saw and felt it, yet prov'd the sentiment of the elegant writer, who, while he tells us

“None without *hope* e'er lov'd the
brightest fair,

adds to this assertion one as true,

“That *love will hope*, where reason
would despair.”

I flatter'd myself that in time I
might perhaps move the tender heart

of Harriot to pity ; latterly, however, this delusion has ceased, and I have contended with my passion ever since I felt that I must at some time resign her to you.

Perhaps, to contend with our passions is always to conquer, either entirely or in part ; at present my victory is only in part, for I cannot stay to witness your happiness. — Yet I am not, indeed I am not such a wretch, as to regret it. In proof of this, I now impart a secret, which will embolden you to press your suit.

I could have brought myself, so have I master'd my passion, to have revealed this to you when you solicited
my

my permission to act in conformity to your Maria's wish. Obligated as I felt myself by the friendship that induc'd you to consult my feelings, *I yet was silent*; because I judged it ill suited to this excellent woman's worth, that *assurance of success* should be united to your first supplication of her love.

You will not blame, and you will still allow me to adore at a distance, her I dare no longer see—not now at least. When I dare trust myself I will; for returning to be held as the first friend of your hearts, is the most earnest wish of mine. And as I have already shewn how unreasonably a lover will hope,

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hope, I may perhaps, at some period,
evidence the former proposition, that

“None without *hope* e’er lov’d the
brightest fair.”

When I produce you an example
of this, expect to see, but till then you
must only expect to hear, from,

Your faithful,

VINCENT.



THE END.

